

The main storage 1503, which is a member known under the alias of a memory, includes all the addressable space, in processors and internal storage units, used to execute commands. The main storage 1503 consists mainly of

5 semiconductor elements. It stores and retains inputted programs and data and reads them to a register under instructions from the CPU 1501.

The semiconductor elements composing the main storage 1503 may be RAM (Random Access Memory) or ROM (Read Only Memory). ID and password information entered via a user interface in FIG. 5, for example, is stored temporarily in the main storage 1503 and then sent by the CPU 1501 via the communications device 1506 (S1 in FIG. 4). The main storage 1503 also functions as display memory for displaying the
15 user interface in FIG. 5.

The output device 1504, which is a member for outputting computational results of the CPU 1501, may be a CRT, plasma display panel, liquid crystal display, other display, printing device such as a printer, audio output
20 device, etc. According to the present invention, the display apparatus of each terminal in FIG. 3 corresponds to the output device 1504.

The auxiliary storage 1505, which supplements the storage capacity of the main storage 1503, may be a floppy
25 disk, CD-ROM, CD-R, CD-W, MO, DVD, or the like driven by a magnetic disk drive, optical disk drive, semiconductor disk drive, or the like. The auxiliary storage 1505

implements the function of a database. It corresponds, for example, to the shared DB 8 according to the present invention. It also has the function of storing programs as is the case with the main storage.

- 5 The communications device 1506, which is a device for communication with external networks, sends and receive data, carries out digital-analog conversion, etc. depending on the connected network. According to the present invention, transmission of data in steps in FIG. 10 4, for example, is carried out via the communications device 1506 under the control of the CPU 1501.

The devices described above, are interconnected via an address bus or data bus and are used for two-way communications of various data.

- 15 The explanation of the step of each flowchart according to this embodiment and the processes described with reference to various drawings are carried out as the CPU 1501 executes the control of various devices according to various program code stored in the main storage 1503 or 20 auxiliary storage 1505.

It is assumed that the terminal 41, terminals 13, 31, 41, 51, 61, and 71, terminal 32, and mobile terminal 62 shown in FIG. 2 have the same configuration as in FIG. 15.

[Shared database]

- 25 The shared DB 8 contains databases and their field information as illustrated below by an example. The information stored in the shared DB 8 is also stored in the

auxiliary storage 1505 in FIG. 15. The information stored in the shared DB is provided to an auxiliary storage of each terminal shown in FIG. 3 and stored there. Also, the information is updated by the CPUs mounted in the terminals.

- 5 Incidentally, the databases and their fields shown below may be deleted or new ones may be added depending on the users and characteristics of office consumables handled by the sales and collection system.

10 ● Seller information database

Seller ID and password

Name, address, telephone number, and facsimile number

E-mail address

Customer representative information

15 Sales performance information

Collection performance information

Inventory information

● Warehouse information database

20 Master warehouse information

Branch warehouse information

Master-branch connection information

Warehouse-specific inventory information

- 25 The master warehouse information and branch warehouse information include the locations of the warehouses, etc. The master-branch connection information includes